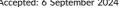
### ORIGINAL ARTICLE





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# Husserl's Analogical Axiological Reason: A Phenomenology of Wish Feeling Fulfillment

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### Abstract

The most contentious tenet of Husserl's phenomenology of feelings is his conclusion that there is an analogy between axiological reason and theoretical reason. Simply, Husserl asserts that the axiological validation of feelings is analogical to the theoretical validation of judgments. While the scholarship has debated the merits of Husserl's analogy over the last 120 years, this paper presents a new accurate interpretation, because it is the first to highlight how Husserl develops this analogy by most often comparing the fulfillment of judgments to the fulfillment of wish feeling intentions. Specifically, I examine how Husserl analogizes wish fulfillment to theoretical fulfillment at different times; in the 1901 Logical Investigations, in his 1908 Lectures on Ethics, and in 1910 manuscripts from Studien zur Struktur des Bewusstseins. In light of this original interpretation, I conclude by arguing - contra popular readings - that Husserl does not over-intellectualize feelings and their validation.

# **KEYWORDS**

emotions, ethics, fulfillment, joy, satisfaction, value

#### INTRODUCTION 1

In his 1908/09 Lectures on Ethics, Edmund Husserl asserts that in addition to theoretical reason, there is also axiological reason. While theoretical reason is operative in objectifying intentions, such as perception, imagination, and

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judgment, axiological reason obtains for affective non-objectifying feeling intentions, such as joy, wishing, liking, and disliking.

While Husserl thinks that this conclusion is *prima facie* sensible, when he goes "back to the things themselves" to pinpoint exactly how axiological reason functions in feeling intentions, his attempts are often frustrated. In the experiences that Husserl examines, he frequently finds that only theoretical objectifying reason is operative. Indeed, Husserl even asserts that the dilemma of pinpointing and describing the function of axiological reason is "the most difficult problem" (Hua = Husserliana XXVIII: 253) in philosophy and the "darkest part of our world of knowledge" (Hua XXVIII: 255).<sup>1</sup>

Despite his frustrations, Husserl believes that he has uncovered a clue, which can lead to positive discoveries. Husserl asserts that it is possible to determine the function of axiological reason, because axiological reason is analogical to theoretical reason. In his 1901 *Logical Investigations* (Hua XIX/1970. Hereafter, LU), Husserl outlined the operation of theoretical rationality; He described how objectifying acts can be proven true or false when the objectifying intention is fulfilled. Husserl then asserts, in his *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory* (Hua XXVIII. Hereafter, WL) that – analogously – there is axiological reason, because evaluative feeling intentions can be proven correct or incorrect. He believes that the validation of feeling acts must occur via a process analogical to the fulfillment of objectifying intentions. Husserl thus repeatedly attempts – over the course of hundreds of pages of lectures – to identify and describe the experience where feelings are validated via a process analogical to fulfillment. The secondary literature has rightly followed Husserl in focusing on the topic of analogical fulfillment; Thinkers have consistently debated Husserl's account of the fulfillment of feeling acts for the last 120 years.

Critical for the purpose of this paper is that when Husserl does concretely execute his descriptive study of the fulfillment of feeling acts, he normally approaches it by looking at the same example. In both his early and mature texts where Husserl develops his account of the fulfillment of feeling acts, he frequently focuses his examination on the fulfillment of wish intentions. He describes the fulfillment of wish feeling acts as analogical to the fulfillment of objectifying intentions to discover how axiological reason is akin to theoretical objectifying reason. Because of this, it is surprising to learn that there are still no publications in German or English that are entirely dedicated to examining Husserl's theory of wishes (or their fulfillment).<sup>2</sup> Even though Husserl's theory of axiological reason and the fulfillment of feelings are some of the most contentious elements of his thought today, no one has properly unpacked Husserl's observations concerning feeling fulfillment, as he himself often presents them – by describing wish feeling acts.

A primary goal of this essay is accordingly to correct this lack. This paper is the first dedicated to addressing the evolution of Husserl's conclusions about the fulfillment of feeling intentions – as analogical to the fulfillment of objectifying acts – in the way he most frequently developed them, namely, through his descriptive analyses of wishes. In doing so, I present my original reading of Husserl's analogical axiological reason via a phenomenology of wish feeling fulfilment.

This task – of properly introducing Husserl's axiological reason – is accomplished in the following two sections, which are divided by time period. In section two, I examine Husserl's early descriptive psychology of the two possible kinds of fulfillment involved in wishing acts, as it is presented in the 1901 *Logical Investigations*. To be noted from the start is that Husserl, in LU, is only beginning to develop an account of feelings, such that his conclusions about their fulfillment are inchoate; Husserl's 1901 descriptions only prefigure his later analogizing. In section three, I show how Husserl – in later texts – works from this initial 1901 foundation to develop his robust phenomenology of the fulfillment of feeling acts. I outline Husserl's new theory, according to which four different kinds of fulfillment can be involved in a wish experience. To unpack Husserl's insights, I analyze passages from his 1908/09 Lectures found in his *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory* (Hua XXVIII), an overlooked 1910 manuscript entitled "Can a Wish be Fulfilled in Joy?" (Hua XLIII/2: 287–293; Hereafter EWF),<sup>3</sup> and other manuscripts<sup>4</sup> found in the recently published Husserliana volume, *Studies concerning the Structures of Consciousness* (Hua XLIII/2. Hereafter, Studien).<sup>5</sup>

In the conclusion, I directly engage with the contemporary literature. I leverage my original interpretation of Husserl's phenomenology of wishing to demonstrate – in contrast to previous critiques – that Husserl does not

overly intellectualize feelings. I argue that Husserl's account properly respects, on the one hand, the distinction between wish feeling intentions and objectifying acts and, on the other hand, the division between axiological reason and theoretical reason.

#### 2 **EARLIER HUSSERL: TWO FULFILLMENTS**

In this section, I discuss Husserl's theory of fulfillment from his 1901 Logical Investigations in two steps. I first outline Husserl's 1901 account of objectifying reason and objectifying fulfillment. Second, I demonstrate how Husserl draws from his conclusions about objectifying fulfillment to describe wish fulfillment.

#### 2.1 **Fulfillment of Objectifying Acts**

To address the first task, I begin by noting that Husserl's theory of the fulfillment of objectifying acts is grounded in his understanding of their intentionality. He believes that objectifying intentions refer to or objectify objects, with their objective determinations. Objective determinations are determinations such as the size, shape, or color of the object (Hua XIX: 425-431/1970: 119-122; See Hua XLIII/2: 2-10).

Husserl further observes that objectifying acts can intend the same object in two different ways. First, in a signitive intention or (somewhat synonymously) empty intention, the object is not given to me in its full presence. In an empty act, the object is so-to-speak intended in its absence. I do not see the object with my eyes before me or with my mind's eye via imagination or memory (Hua XIX: 586-589, 610-614/1970: 218-220, 235-238; Byrne 2019, 2022a). For example, when I emptily apprehend a state of affairs, whose proposition is expressed as, "The car is red", there is no image of the car given to me. The intention is 'empty' of the image or presence of the car as red. Second, in an intuitive act, the object before me is (or may be) disclosed as it actually is. I do see the object before me through perception, imagination, or memory. The intuitive apprehension is not empty, but rather 'full' of the object's presence (Hua XIX: 606-610, 621-625/1970: 233-235, 242-246).

Fulfillment, which is the site of objectifying reason, occurs when empty and intuitive objectifying acts, which intend the same object - or in the case of frustration, differently determined object(s) - synthesize with each other. I identify the emptily intended object with the intuitively given object. The intuitive objectifying act can then fulfill the empty objectifying act and serves as a check upon it. Theoretical reason is here operative because, in identification and (dynamic) fulfillment, my current perceptual intuitive apprehension of the object (as it actually is) can reveal whether my previous empty intending of the object as existing this or that way is right (Hua XIX: 558-560/1970: 206-209). Through fulfillment, I come to learn if my act was (objectively) true or false. I may have previously emptily intended a car as red without ever perceptually intuiting it as actually being red. If I then perceptually intuit the object as red, via identification and fulfillment, I come to realize that my previous empty act was true. Alternatively, if this car is intuited as blue, my empty intention is frustrated and revealed as false.<sup>6</sup>

#### 2.2 Fulfillment of Objectifying Acts and the Satisfaction of Wish Acts

Having described the fulfillment of objectifying acts, Husserl can address the fulfillment of wish feeling intentions. Just as is the case with objectifying acts, Husserl's theory of the fulfillment of a wish is based upon his understanding of the intentionality and structure of the wish intention.

Husserl's important observation concerning the structure of wish feeling intentions is that they do not stand entirely on their own. Wishes - and all feeling acts - are grounded in the intentional content of objectifying intentions. Even though wishes are unlike objectifying intentions, wishes are always founded in the intentional contents

of objectifying acts. A wish is an objectifying act with a wish (feeling quality) grounded in its intentional content (Hua XIX: 402-406, 414-416/1970: 109-112, 115-116). To be emphasized here is that this 1901 conclusion does not establish a building-block theory of consciousness, as if a feeling-layer of consciousness would be placed on top of a distinct objectifying layer. While the founding relationship between feeling and objectification is one-sided, the 'two' intentions are bound together and mutually determine each other. Just as a text is a unity of the scribbles on the page and its meaning, and just as a person is a unity of body and consciousness, so also, a whole feeling experience is the unity of the objectification and the feeling, which mutually determine each other and interpenetrate one another. As such, the idea that a (wish) feeling is 'added' to or 'grounded' in one and the 'same' objectifying intention must be understood in a highly qualified sense (Rinofner-Kreidl 2013: 60-61. See also Staiti 2023; Vongehr 2011: 352-353).

Wish feelings specifically cannot be founded in the intentional content of just any kind of objectifying act. A wish is only founded in the intentional content of an empty intention of the object, where the object is also intended via a neutral doxic position, where I take no stance concerning the existence of that arrival. For example, my wish for my friend's arrival must be grounded in the intentional content of my empty intention of that arrival. In this grounding objectifying act, I do not intuit (for example, perceive) my friend's arrival and I do not mean it as something that is happening (naturally, I cannot wish for something that I mean as already obtaining). When I then wish for the arrival of my friend, which is presented in the objectifying intention, the wishing component of the act is a position that the object desirable.

Husserl further defines founded wishes, by asserting - in 1901 - that wish feelings - and indeed all feelings - do not objectify anything at all! The wish does refer to the object in a new way, but it does not add or objectify any new real determination or 'value'-property to that object. As Melle writes, feeling acts, "have no objective relation other than what the underlying objectifying act constitutes ... According to the terms of the Logical Investigations, the [feeling] act makes no contribution to the constitution of the object" (Melle 1990: 40-41). Simply, wishes - and all feelings - are non-objectifying. While a feeling does relate to its object, the feeling itself does not objectify any object or property.

Based on these insights concerning the founding objectifying act and the founded non-objectifying wish, Husserl can (inchoately) describe how a wish is fulfilled or satisfied. Importantly, in 1901, Husserl identifies two kinds of fulfillment that can occur during a wishing experience. These kinds of fulfillment, which I focus on here (and those that I discuss in the next sections), do not all concern the wish component (the non-objectifying quality) of the act alone. Instead, I unpack Husserl's conclusions about any experiences of validation or satisfaction that can occur for any part of a whole complex wishing act, including all of its objectifying and non-objectifying parts. In other words, I hope to comprehensively address all of the possible fulfillments involved in any component of the wish feeling intention.

In 1901, Husserl concluded that a wish can - first - begin to be fulfilled or satisfied (see note eight) through the fulfillment of its founding theoretical objectifying act. Husserl writes, "The wish-intention can find its fulfilling satisfaction, when the founding mere presentation of the wished-for-object goes over into a corresponding perception" (Hua XIX: 583/1970: 217). As stated, when I wish for my friend's arrival, this wish is founded in the content of the empty objectifying intention of that event (as something that has not yet happened). Subsequently, when I see my friend's arrival, I intuit this arrival as real. I identify the emptily intended friend with the now intuitively given one. The empty objectifying intention of the arrival, which grounds the wish, is then dynamically fulfilled by the intuitive objectifying intention of that same event.9

This first fulfillment, however, is entirely the operation of theoretical reason. This is simply the fulfillment of the founding objectifying act. There is nothing affective about this fulfillment. This fulfillment does not validate the wish as legitimate or illegitimate. The fulfillment that occurs via the intuited arrival of my friend does not show that my wish was right, good, legitimate, or appropriate. This fulfillment has nothing to do with the axiological legitimacy of the wish feeling.

Critically, Husserl also identifies a second step of wish fulfillment by noting that the fulfillment of the objectifying founding act, "never exhausts the fulfillment of the wish, but merely provides its basis" (Hua XIX: 583/1970:

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217). On the basis of the fulfillment of the objectifying intention (whose content founds the wish), there can occur the fulfillment of the wish itself, which Husserl calls the satisfaction (Befriedigen) of the wish. He writes that, "The satisfaction of the specific wish quality is a peculiar act-character, different in kind" from that of the fulfillment of the objectifying intention (Hua XIX: 583/1970: 217).

This conclusion prefigures Husserl's later descriptions concerning the fulfillment of wishes. With these quotes, Husserl is affirming that there is a kind of fulfillment or completion that pertains to the feeling component of the act alone, which is distinct from - "different in kind" from - the fulfillment of the objectifying act. While this insight - that wishes can undergo satisfaction - is important for his later phenomenology, it is unfortunately the case that, in LU, Husserl only mentions satisfaction. In 1901, Husserl does not describe this second kind of fulfillment in any detail (Melle 2012: 55). It is thus necessary to examine Husserl's subsequent writings to begin to understand his robust phenomenology of wish fulfillment.

#### LATER HUSSERL: FOUR FULFILLMENTS 3

Husserl's 1901 theory of wish fulfillment functions as the palimpsest for his later phenomenology of wish experiences and axiological reason; Husserl effaces and works from LU to propose his novel account. I specifically focus on Husserl's revision to his 1901 idea that there are two kinds of fulfillment possible for the whole wish feeling intention. This section is dedicated to discussing Husserl's later conclusion that there are - not two, but rather - four possible kinds of 'fulfillment' for the components of the wish feeling act. Two concern the objectifying acts and the other two concern the wish position itself. For precision, I present the terminology for these four here at the start of this section. There is [as outlined in section 3.1] the fulfillment of the founding objectifying intention (Erfüllung), [3.2] the satisfaction of the wish (Befriedigung), [3.3] the legitimization of the wish (Auswertung or Rechtausweisung), and [3.4] the fulfillment of the founded objectifying intention (Erfüllung). 10 Even though Husserl does not introduce an applicable encompassing term, for clarity, I employ the term "completion" to cover all four of these. In other words, the two fulfillments, the satisfaction, and the legitimization will all be designated as kinds of completion.

As Husserl's new phenomenology of wishes and axiological reason is the result of a complex metamorphosis, it is necessary to examine several of his texts to accurately triangulate and develop his observations. In particular, in this section three, I discuss how he presents his novel account in lectures he delivered in 1908/09 (Hua XXVIII: 237-355; Hereafter WL), a 1910 manuscript entitled "Can a Wish be Fulfilled in Joy" (Hua XLIII/2: 287-293; Hereafter EWF), and other manuscripts from the Studien Husserliana volume. By investigating how Husserl describes the four kinds of completion in these later texts and manuscripts, I can unpack his robust conception of axiological reason.

#### 3.1 Fulfillment (Erfüllung) of the Founding Objectifying Intention

Husserl begins his later analysis of the completions of wish acts by directly adopting some of his 1901 insights concerning the structure of the wish. Husserl again asserts that a wish is founded in the content of an empty objectifying intention. My wish for my friend's arrival is grounded in the content of the empty objectifying intention of that arrival. 11 The first completion, which was already described in LU, is then just the fulfillment of the empty founding objectifying intention. I intuit my friend's arrival, where this fulfills my empty intending of that arrival. Critical for Husserl's goal of pinpointing axiological reason, is his conclusion that this first completion - the fulfillment of the founding objectifying act - involves theoretical reason alone; it is the test of the objectifying act concerning its theoretical rationality. Via this fulfillment of the founding act, the objectifying intention is revealed as theoretically correct or incorrect.

# 3.2 | Satisfaction (Befriedigung) of the Wish

Once this first objectifying fulfillment occurs, I can experience the second kind of completion, the "satisfaction" of the wish. Husserl described this satisfaction as "different in kind" from the theoretical fulfillment in 1901. What is new – in contrast to LU – is that the later Husserl does describe this experience of satisfaction in detail. He begins to define satisfaction by stating that it occurs with the onset of joy. When I see my friend, who I wished for, I am joyed and Husserl claims that it is this joy that satisfies the wish. In WL, Husserl writes, "The wish is satisfied. The conviction of the being of what is desired, which was lacking before, occurs, and with this change in the objectifying basis is essentially connected the transformation of the wish into the joy of fulfillment" (Hua XXVIII: 343). In EWF, Husserl reiterates this idea, writing that, "The satisfaction of the wish is to be found in joy" (Hua XLIII/2: 298). And he states that, "The wish is satisfied with the entrance of the joy, that is, it wins the fullness of joy, that is, joy that can belong to it as a wish" (Hua XLIII/2: 287–288).

While Husserl is certain that a joy can satisfy a wish, he is initially less sure about the kind of reason involved in satisfaction. It is in EWF, where Husserl examines if joys, via satisfaction, (rationally) *validate* wishes in a manner analogical to how intuitive objectifying acts fulfill and (rationally) *validate* empty intentions. Husserl asks, "Can the relationship between joy and wishing parallel the relationship between fulfillment (fulfilling act) and the intention in the objectifying realm?" (Hua XLIII/2: 287). And later, "Can one say that joy is always, according to its essence, a fulfilling act, a satisfying act, that it has a filling function ... and is it thereby the case that the joy corresponds to the empty intention which is the wish?" (Hua XLIII/2: 288).

Husserl sees that the answers to these questions must be negative, because he recognizes that I can experience joy in the arrival of my friend, even though her arrival is something bad, something undesirable. Even if I intend my friend's arrival as valuable via my wish and via my satisfying joy, this does not make it valuable as such. The joy does not rationally validate or legitimize the wish. I can always wish for and then feel joy in some abhorrent event. For Husserl, this means that the satisfaction of the wish via joy is not analogical to the fulfillment of an empty objectifying act via an intuitive objectifying act; satisfying joy does not validate or invalidate the wish in an analogical way to how fulfillment validates the empty act (Hua XLIII/2: 291). Husserl writes that the onset of the joy, "is something entirely different then the fulfillment, which comprises the essence of justification, of progressively making evident, that is, of validation or invalidation (Hua XXVIII: 344). On the same page, he writes, "It is equally clear, that when a wish is fulfilled, the self-evident satisfaction, which belongs to the fulfillment, is not the legitimization (*Rechtausweisung*) of the wish. The joy about the obtaining of the desired can be equally justified or unjustified joy" (Hua XXVIII: 344). Because there is no validation occurring during satisfaction, Husserl must conclude that satisfaction does not involve axiological reason and in fact, it involves no reason at all. Satisfaction is simply an a-rational experience.

# 3.3 | Legitimization (Auswertung or Rechtausweisung) of the Wish

To begin to discuss Husserl's descriptions of the legitimization of the wish I first introduce his transformative mature insight concerning values. In his later works, Husserl concludes that feeling acts, such as wishes, do disclose values. On the one hand, Husserl asserts that feeling acts do not objectify values (Hua XXVIII: 340). When I am happy about my friend's arrival, I do not intend that arrival with some objectified value-determination, "good." Only the objective event, the arrival, objectively appears. On the other hand, even though these values are not objective, our feelings do indeed disclose values, which modify the appearance of the intentional object. Felt values are not objective parts of the object which appear, but are instead that through which or by which we experience the object that appears. The value is so-to-speak the adverb that modifies the manifesting of the object. James Hart outlines Husserl's adverbial understanding of this first-tier disclosure of value, by writing, "[V]alues are not what we experience but how we experience the world ... Borrowing a scholastic distinction, values then would not be the *id quod*, but the *id quo ...* 

they would be the adverbs of the appearings of things or people: She is appearing stunningly, charmingly, sexily, etc." (Hart 1997: 6). While the value does pertain to the appearing of the object, the value is not an objective determination of that thing. Husserl thus states that first-tier values belong to "another dimension" (Hua XXVIII: 340) than objective determinations. 13

By concluding that wish feeling intentions do disclose values, Husserl is able to identify a kind of completion, which does function via axiological reason, namely legitimization. In legitimization, a feeling is rationally validated, but not theoretically validated; (Melle 1990: 41-44).

To describe this process of legitimization, Husserl believes that he must avoid two different extremes; He must describe legitimization and axiological reason as analogical to, but not identical with fulfillment and theoretical reason. On the one hand - and this point is rarely acknowledged - if Husserl described axiological reason as too dissimilar to theoretical reason, then he runs the risk of defining axiological reason as no reason at all. Reason requires validation, such that Husserl must describe legitimization as an experience where a feeling is validated or invalidated. On the other hand, Husserl could describe the legitimization of feelings as too analogical to the verification of objectifying acts. This would be the case, for example, if Husserl did believe that a joy validates a wish in the exact same way as intuition verifies an empty act. If Husserl adopted this perspective (which, as shown, he does not), he would be guilty of overly intellectualizing feelings (see section four below). Despite these challenges, Husserl succeeds in walking across this tightrope.

On the one hand, Husserl describes legitimization as properly similar (and not too dissimilar) to fulfillment in two ways. First, legitimization is analogous to fulfillment, because in both, there is a transition from an experience that is more opaque to less opaque, from less full to more full, from murky to transparent. Looking first at the less full, less transparent axiological experience, I can, for example, wish for and mean (meinen) a value, although this nonobjective value and the situation surrounding it are only intended in a vague or unclear manner (Hua XLIII/2: 284-285). For example, I execute my wish for the arrival of my friend carelessly or without any consideration; I only vaguely intend the goodness of her arrival via the wish. As vaguely intended, the value is not given in 'full presence', such that this remiss wish can analogically be called 'empty' (Hua XLIII/2: 284-285). I could then intend the value of my friend's arrival in a less opaque manner. When I do intend the situation and the value in this more distinct way, it is as if a fog has lifted, where the value is now given to me in a more unequivocal or transparent manner. I do see the value in full(er) presence, such that this experience is the axiological analog of 'intuition' (Hua XLIII/2: 283-285). For this reason, Husserl calls this clarified intending of value the "Wertnehmung", literally translated as value taking, as analogous to "Wahrnehmung", which is the German word for perception, but is literally translated as truth-taking (e.g. Hua XLIII/2: 523). With these conclusions, Husserl has demonstrated that legitimization is an operation of reason. When the clearer intention of the value legitimizes the less clear intention of that value, the latter is validated or invalidated by the former. Through legitimization, I see that the vague valuing of the arrival of my friend was (axiologically) rationally correct. The arrival is revealed to be actually valuable, in a similar way to how fulfillment reveals the emptily intended to be true.

On the other hand, Husserl is able to properly differentiate legitimization from fulfillment by demonstrating how they have different mechanisms. Fulfillment can occur when one act that intuitively represents an object via apprehension of contents, synthesizes with another intention, which does not intuitively apprehend contents to represent a value object (Hua XIX: 420, 525, 622-624/1970: 116-117, 174, 242-245). In contrast, legitimization can occur via the mechanism of clarification. Specifically, legitimization is possible - most simply stated - when I more transparently intend the value by clarifying the object of value, the situation surrounding the value, and the reasons why I value that object (Hua XLIII/2: 319. See section 3.32 below). If I attempt to clarify my wish for my friend's arrival, I might recognize that this 'friend' is always very mean to all others and myself, such that her arrival is not a good, is not desirable. The clarification reveals that this friend's arrival is not only not valuable, but also has a negative value. It is via this clarified intention that I 'intuit' the negative value of her arrival, which - through delegitimization - strikes out my wish.14

In WL and EWF, Husserl attempts to describe this clarification as a simple kind of experience. He states that clarification is the experience where I track and test my motivation for my evaluative wishing. I explore if my valuation actually has to do with the matter at hand (such that it would be rationally motivated). As Sophie Loidolt writes, Husserl thinks that this process of clarification, "is not mysterious ... but is instead concrete work in the concept and situation analysis" (Loidolt 2011: 320). Husserl outlines clarification by describing the case where I dislike someone only after hearing her name, Eulalie. Via clarification, Husserl says that I could realize that I negatively value this person, because I previously read a novel where the villain also had the same name. Husserl writes, "What can poor Eulalie do concerning the fact that I once read a novel in which a monster of a woman was called Eulalie?" (Hua XXVIII: 410). Through this clarification, I recognize that my negative evaluation of Eulalie is incorrect, as the valuation has nothing to do with the situation at hand, but is instead motivated by external association.

# 3.4 The Layered Structure of Wish Acts and the Complexities of Legitimization

While I have introduced Husserl's theory of axiological reason and the legitimization of feelings in the just above section 3.31, a thorough understanding of Husserl's conclusions requires a deeper dive into the complexities of wishes and their clarification. Indeed – in two other 1910 manuscripts from Studien<sup>15</sup> – Husserl saw that wishes (and most feeling intentions) are composed of multiple interrelated layers – including multiple partial objectifying acts and feeling evaluative intentions – such that clarifying a wish may involve clarifying each of these layers and their interrelations. Only when each partial intention of the wish is validated can the wish itself be seen as legitimate. To properly outline Husserl's account then, this section is first dedicated to presenting his robust account of the architectonic structure of a wish feeling act, detailing all its parts to provide a complete vision of his theory. This section will – second – offer a thorough account of the legitimization of wishing by discussing the clarification of each component. By doing so, this paper presents a more complete picture of Husserl's descriptions of the complicated operation of axiological reason via his analysis of the legitimization of wish intentions.

Husserl's discussion of the many interlaced layers of a wish begins simple enough, with a reiteration of a conclusion he had already arrived at in LU. In 1901 and 1910, Husserl concludes that the ground level of all wishes is the objectifying intention of the wished-for object (see note six above); I intend the arrival of my friend via an empty objectifying act. Yet, Husserl now recognizes that this event – my friend's arrival – cannot be wished for if it is *only* objectively presented. The object can only be wished for, if it has 'already' undergone another 'prior' evaluation, that is, another axiological position-taking. The object must be – via a (partial) feeling act – positively valued, such that it "must stand there as something 'beautiful'" (Hua XLIII/2: 496).

Husserl additionally excavates another stratum of wishing when he sees that – during the wish – I cannot only be objectively aware of the wished-for object. Rather I must also be objectively conscious of my extant circumstances; I must be intending my currently obtaining state of affairs. Adding further complication is Husserl's recognition that these obtaining circumstances must also be evaluated positively or negatively during the wish. Husserl writes that, during my wish, I intend, "the current state of happy affairs, which is actually given to us at the moment of wishing, and that means, is given in value-consciousness (*Wertbewusstsein*)" (Hua XLIII/2: 499).

On the basis of these underlying (objectifying and) axiological strata, I perform a preferring of the wished for state of affairs over my current state of affairs. Husserl writes, "The question is ... if the existence of [the wished-for object] A is something more beautiful, than what is actual in my current valuable or joyed state of affairs" (Hua XLIII/2: 498). Simply stated, I can wish for my friend's arrival, if I – on the basis of a complex of situational and personal motivations – prefer her (positive, negative, or neutral) valued future arrival to her (respectively less positively, more negatively, or simply negatively) valued current absence.

Even more interesting, Husserl claims that when I wish for my friend's arrival, I not only – as he observed in LU (Hua XIX: 583/1970: 216) – take a neutral doxic stance towards that arrival. Instead, I explicitly intend her arrival as something that is *not existent*. During the wish, I not only perform, "a presentation of A, and this is the quasi-being of

A." Rather, I also execute a "consciousness of nullity (Nichtigkeitsbewusstsein)" (Hua XLIII/2: 497). When I wish for my friend's arrival, I intend that arrival (and its positive value) as something that does not exist - as null. The overthrowing leads to a negative feeling, which Husserl classifies as a missing. He writes that my intending of the preferred object as null, "motivates an actual feeling, that of missing; the contrast-good is 'missed'" (Hua XLIII/2: 502).

Finally, it is this missed object, which I can wish for. The wish is a desire, where I take the axiological stance that the missed object is desirable. I wish for or desire it; I intend it as a desirable object, as a seinsollende object (Hua XLIII/2: 495-496. See also Hua XLIII/2: 9-15). In other words, I can take a wishing axiological stance towards (that is, I can wish for) the object - which I intend as a good, as better than current circumstances, as something that is null, and as missed - as something that is desirable and should be. When I wish for my friend's arrival, I am taking the position that her (good, preferable, non-existent, and missed) arrival is desirable.

Because Husserl describes wishes as having these many layers of (partial) intentions, legitimization is the process by which (at least some of) the many intended values are tested and clarified. While Husserl never addresses the complexity of clarification in these Studien manuscripts in extensive detail, this process can be straightforwardly unpacked. In the case where I wish for my friend's arrival, I would first make sure that my objective experiences of the two states of affairs - the arrival and my current situation - are veridical. I could then test and clarify my evaluation of the arrival and my evaluation of my current circumstances. I would then clarify my preference of the former over the latter: I could subsequently test my negative feeling of missing, which is experienced on the basis of my nullifying act. Finally, I could clarify my desire, that is, my wish for her arrival. This layered process of testing and clarifying each evaluative intention within a wish exemplifies Husserl's intricate approach to understanding how wishes achieve legitimacy and how axiological reason operates in practice.

#### 3.5 Fulfillment (Erfüllung) of the Founded Objectifying Act

Similar to legitimization, Husserl's discovery of the fourth kind of completion - the fulfillment of the founded objectifying act - is also grounded in a transformative insight; In his later works, Husserl concludes that - in addition to feelings - there is another way that we can experience values. We can intend values in two distinct ways, which can be called founding and founded (Hua XXVIII: 323-330. Rinofner-Kreidl 2013: 69-70. See also note 13 above).

The first - possibly founding - experiences of values are simple feeling acts. During the wish feeling, I adverbially and implicitly experience the value of the object, namely, the value, "desirable" (Hua XXVIII: 340). 16 In WL and EWF, Husserl claims that we can experience values in a second way, because the values experienced on the first tier are objectifiable. When wishing, I can decide that I want to pick out, see, or know the adverbial value of this object – its desirability - rather than feel this. To do so, I execute another new objectifying intention, which is founded in the founding wish feeling. The founded objectifying act is directed at the same object as the founding wish feeling. Yet, the founded objectifying act reifies the adverbially experienced value of desirability into an objective value determination of the object.<sup>17</sup> Critically, this founded or higher level experience of value is not affective, but objectifying or cognitive. Strictly considered, when executing such a founded objectifying act, I have no affective experience or feeling about the object; I am not valuing the object. Instead, I objectively or cognitively grasp the value, which was adverbially given in the founded wish feeling. Husserl writes, "Values are something objectifiable (Objectivierbares), however, values as objects are objects of certain objectifying acts; they are not constituted in the valuing act itself, but instead constitute themselves in the objectifications built on valuing acts" (Hua XXVIII: 340, see 342). Rinofner-Kreidl outlines this point well, writing,

"While the experiences of a value on the first tier is directed to a valuable object, but does not constitute an independent, separate reference to an objects of value - to a value as an object - this is exactly what happens on the secondary tier, in that a value is now referred to as an abstract quality. ... [T]he positing of value, which is present in the immediate experience of value as a mere possibility,

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as only a potential positing, is itself not an act of emotion, but an act of cognition" (Rinofner-Kreidl 2013: 73. See also Staiti 2023. 15).

Husserl works from these insights to conclude that the fourth kind of completion is the fulfillment of this founded objectifying act, which is founded in the founding wish feeling. When objectified, the value becomes an objective determination of the object similar to (but not the same as) other objective determinations (Hua XLIII/2: 69, 118). As such, it is possible to emptily intend or intuitively intend this objectified value (of the object). And it is thus possible to experience fulfillment on this higher level. Simply stated, this fulfillment is just a fulfillment of an empty act, by an intuitive act (as outlined in section 3.1), but now on the founded level; The founded empty objectification can be fulfilled by the founded intuitive objectification of the value. Via this fulfillment, the founded empty objectifying intending of the value is thereby justified as correct. From this, Husserl can initially conclude that the only kind of reason at work here – when strictly considered – is theoretical reason. In this fulfillment, one objectifying intention is fulfilling another objectifying intention. No feeling or axiological intentions are directly involved.

At the same time, theoretical reason is here restricted by what is actually given in feeling experiences. Higher level objectification is not creation. The higher level objectification simply objectifies what is given in the feeling experience itself. The objective intuition of the value just brings what was already there into the objective cognitive register. To have objective intuition of an objective value, the founding feeling must be an 'intuitive' givenness of the value (a *Wertnehmung* of the value). While I can objectively ascribe values to whatever I want, I can only objectively intuit values in the case where I 'intuitively' feel them via lower level *Wertnehmung*. Husserl writes that "emotional acts, I mean, provide the materials for objectification" (Hua XLIII/2: 39). And in *Ideas I*, he outlines that, when we objectify the value, "the conversion – in these examples – is to be understood in such a way that it preserves the noema of the original mental process with regards to its whole essence ..." (Hua III-1: 260–261/1983: 271).

Critically, Husserl's project of formal axiology (e.g. Hua XXVIII: 70–101; Drummond 2014) is built on these conclusions about founded objectification. Only because our objective founded judgments about values are indirectly checked against the things themselves – against the values themselves as they are adverbially given and objectified – can these judgments be verified or falsified. Negatively stated, if judgments about values could not be indirectly checked against given felt values (which are objectified), then there would be no way to determine if these judgments were correct or incorrect. Yet, the project of formal axiology requires that the judgments about feelings do have a truth value and that when certain judgments are true, others must be false.

Regardless of the viability of Husserl's formal axiology, these observations reveal that the operation of reason for judgments about values is more complex than it first appears. On the one hand, this fourth completion – the fulfillment of an objectifying intention founded in a feeling act – is certainly an operation of theoretical reason. On the other hand, the use of this reason is always to be indirectly checked against adverbially given values, which I see via the *Wertnehmung* of the values, which is not itself a cognitive or objective experience. Moreover, these conclusions also do not hint at any intellectualization of feelings, but instead demonstrate a respect for the connections and distinctions between axiological and theoretical rationality. While we execute theoretical reason via objectifying acts, our theoretical judgments about values are – from the start – inextricably intertwined with our feelings.

# 4 | CONCLUSION

To conclude, I leverage my technical analysis of Husserl's phenomenology of axiological reason to contribute to the ongoing debates concerning Husserl's intellectualism. Traditionally, the orthodox interpretation of Husserl suggested that his theory of feeling acts was inappropriately intellectualist. According to this view, Husserl excessively relied on the analogy between feelings and objectifying acts, and thus between axiological and theoretical reason. For example, Crowell argues that Husserl's reliance on this analogy distorts his theory through a "cognitivist lens"

(Crowell 2005: 102). Crowell explicitly claims that Husserl's description of legitimization is incorrectly intellectualist. He writes that "Husserl's conclusion - that wishes or desires can be questioned about their legitimacy and that the good is that correlate of desire which survives such questioning - is not derived from a phenomenology of the passions but from an analogy with theoretical reason" (Crowell 2005: 107).

With the continued publication of Husserl's oeuvre, however, there has been a backlash to this interpretation. Many scholars now defend Husserl's account, claiming that his analogizing does not warp his descriptions of feelings, but instead allows for him to properly describe those intentions and their legitimacy. For example, Delamare writes that "the prejudice of an intellectualist Husserl has been definitively defeated" (Delamare 2023: 266), before going on to argue that Husserl does not misrepresent feeling intentions when describing them as analogical to objectifying acts. In another work, Delamare also asserts that "Husserl himself [is] far from the image of an 'intellectualist' with which he has long been associated" (Delamare 2022: 55). For another case, Staiti claims "that Husserl is not committed to any objectionable form of intellectualism" (Staiti 2023: 17) and that Husserl can stand against "the charge of intellectualism" (Staiti 2023: 11).

While I agree with almost all of Crowell's writings concerning Husserl, the conclusions of this paper make it difficult to argue that Husserl falls into distorting intellectualism when describing feelings. Throughout his writings, Husserl continued to suitably distinguish between the axiological rationality of wish feelings and the theoretical rationality of objectifying intentions. In Husserl's early writings - from LU - he describes the fulfillment of the founding objectifying intention as possessing theoretical rationality alone and he does not make any claims concerning the rationality of the satisfaction of the wish (quality). Husserl's later writings from WL, EWF, and other manuscripts, efface and advance these 1901 ideas, while continuing to not over-intellectualize feelings. Husserl concludes that the fulfillments for the two objectifying intentions, which are founding for and founded in the wish act, are operative via theoretical reason. Furthermore, he states that the satisfaction of the wish feeling itself involves no rationality and thus cannot be analogical to the fulfillment of an objectifying intention. The later Husserl only describes the legitimization of a (wish) feeling intention, which functions via axiological reason, as properly analogical to the fulfillment of objectifying intentions, which operates via theoretical reason. Yet, even here, Husserl takes care to differentiate axiological legitimization from theoretical fulfillment. He concludes that legitimization occurs via clarification and not via intuitive sensuous representation through apprehension. In sum, I affirm that Husserl's analogical approach does not distort but rather enriches our phenomenological understanding of feelings. Ultimately, this observation reinforces the coherence and depth of Husserl's philosophical project.

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# CONFLICT OF INTEREST

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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### **ENDNOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> For Husserliana volumes, I provide references to the corresponding English translations where available, following a slash after the German pagination. All quotations from the Logical Investigations come from the First Edition.
- <sup>2</sup> This is naturally not to deny that there are a few essays, which do touch upon Husserl's theory of wishing. For example, Rudolf Bernet, Ullrich Melle, and Andrea Staiti have succinctly examined how Husserl conceived of the genetic relationship between drives and wishes (Bernet 2006: 44; Melle 1997: 178-180; 2012: 55, 65-67; Staiti 2019: 13-15). Bernet has also addressed wishes in his new book, although he does not draw from Husserl, but instead develops a psychoanalysis through Freud and Lacan (Bernet 2020). Further, Celia Cabrera and Verónica Kretsche, as well as Christian Lotz and

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- Only one secondary source examines EWF in any detail, namely Ullrich Melle's 2012 chapter. However, Melle only explores EWF on one whole page (Melle 2012: 67) and much of this consists of quotes from Husserl. Despite the brevity of Melle's analysis, I am greatly indebted to his observations.
- <sup>4</sup> The most important other texts that I draw from are: The 1909 "Wish and wish states" (Hua XLIII/2: 324–329); The 1909, "Enjoyment as perception of the value of the liked. The distinction between the direct and indirect liking. Lack of fulness in the joy as the *Anlass* for the wish" (Hua XLIII/2: 421–422). Additionally, in 3.32, I extensively discuss Husserl's observation, that wishes (and most feeling intentions) are composed of multiple interrelated layers such that the fourth kind of fulfillment for the wish legitimacy can involve clarifying each of these layers and their interrelations. To unpack this observation, I explore two other 1910 manuscripts entitled, "Drive-Feeling, Feeling of Lack, Desire, and Wish" (Hua XLIII/2, 482–490), and, "Wish and Desire. The Founding Act of the Wish" (Hua XLIII/2, 491–505).
- <sup>5</sup> From this list of works, one can recognize that I am only addressing Husserl's theory of feelings and axiological reason, as it is presented in his early and middle period. In his works from the 20s and 30s, Husserl overcomes the limitations of his (formal) axiology, by executing his phenomenology of feelings that is centered on the concepts of the 'call' (*Ruf*) and 'vocation' (*Beruf*). Byrne 2022c; Loidolt 2011: 330–335; Melle 2002.
- <sup>6</sup> To avoid misinterpretation, it is worthwhile to highlight that Husserl even in his very early works –recognized that there is no such thing as a purely objectively act, which lacks affective and volitional components. Already in his 1893 "Notes towards a Theory of Interest (Hua XXXVIII: 159–189), Husserl concludes that feelings and moods guide all of our objectifying interests. For example, Husserl sees that the mood of grief involves a tendency to be interested in objects that will prolong my grief, as they will displease me. Husserl writes that, because of the mood, "He [the griever] does not grieve the objects he is looking at now, yet he may now be inclined to notice what is wrong with them and anything that is suitable for nourishing (nähren) his grief" (Hua XXXVIII: 176). For another example, Husserl writes that once I become frustrated, "I am inclined to be frustrated about other things: about the grey sky, the frolicking of the children on the street, etc." (Hua XXXVIII: 177). Maren Wehrle clarifies this point well, by writing that, for the early Husserl, "To describe a full event of attention one also has to add an aspect of feeling, expressed here as interest, that has to correspond to every act of perceptual intentionality" (Wehrle 2015: 50). Concerning these ideas, see also Byrne 2022b, 2022c.
- <sup>7</sup> Husserl writes, "For there is a law which ties the quality of wishing to an underlying presentation, i.e. to an objectifying act, and more precisely to a 'mere presentation'" (Hua XIX: 582/1970: 216. See also Hua XXVIII: 343; Hua XLIII/2: 367).
- 8 To be highlighted here is that, when discussing feelings in LU, Husserl treats these two terms fulfillment and satisfaction as somewhat synonymous. As I discuss in the following sections, he subsequently regretted treating them as equivalent.
- <sup>9</sup> Naturally, an empty objectifying act can be fulfilled by the intuitive *imagination* of the wished-for circumstance. However, this fulfillment would only be provisional and demonstrate that the empty intention *could* be fulfilled via perception proper. Husserl discusses this provisional fulfillment at length and its importance for understanding the possibility or impossibility of meanings in Hua XX/1: 141–150. To my knowledge, only Melle and myself have discussed this point in detail in our publications. See Byrne 2020, 2021a, 2021b; Melle 1998.
- <sup>10</sup> Husserl only emphasizes the importance of properly distinguishing between these four terms at the end of EWF (Hua XLIII/2: 291–292). As such, he does not properly differentiate these four throughout most of EWF and all of WL, as will be evident in many of the quotations that I cite in what follows.
- As I discuss in section 3.32 below, in his mature writings, Husserl describes wishes as having a complicated layered structured, while still ultimately maintaining that a wish is founded in the intentional content of an empty objectifying act.
- Important to highlight is that in Studien Husserl presents two different views concerning wishes. The key idea of the first theory is that a wish is not axiological, that is, it does not disclose a value. Instead, only feelings such as liking or delight disclose values. The wish itself is then just a reaction to the value disclosed by the liking or delight. In the case of wishing for the arrival of my friend, my wish would not be an evaluation of the arrival. Instead, I experience an act of liking directed towards my friend's arrival, and this liking motivates my reactive wish for it. James Jardine outlines Husserl's account of these reactive emotions well, writing that in addition to wishing, "anger, joy, fear, and the like are lived as ways that we respond or react to experienced objects, rather than merely as new kinds of affective receptivity ([Hua XLIII/2:] 101–102, 120–121). Such reactive emotions correspond to what Husserl had earlier termed 'intentional feelings,' and he now reinterprets a central claim of the Investigations by noting that they are typically motivationally responsive to worldly matters, not merely as perceived, but also as felt in value-reception' (Jardine 2020: 60. See also Delamare 2023: 276–277). While I recognize that Husserl does present this first account in many manuscripts from Studien that I explore in this paper, as well as in many lectures from WL. On this second account, Husserl still

- concludes that wishes are reactions to underlying values, referred to by founding evaluative feelings (Hua XLIII/2: 496). At the same time, Husserl claims that wishes are also axiological feelings - specifically desire intentions - which reference their own values. He asserts that wishes are special kinds of reactive desires, which do refer to their objects as having the value, desirable (Hua XLIII/2: 291, 497-500).
- <sup>13</sup> In other manuscripts from Studien, Husserl describes another kind of empty valuation, which Delamare calls a "cold" valuation. These valuations are entirely anticipatory and do not involve bodily affective sensations (Hua XLIII/2: 33, 395, 431, 543; Delamare 2023: 277-279).
- <sup>14</sup> Clarification as Husserl describes it here may appears as if it is so different from objective fulfillment via intuitive apprehension, that it is not analogical to objective fulfillment at all. To defend Husserl against this admittedly good point, it is helpful to remember that intuition is not necessarily a literal seeing, but can instead occur via better understanding. For example, in LU, Husserl describes how the working through or breaking down of a mathematical equation is an intuition and fulfillment. For example, he claims that by working from  $(5^3)^4$  to  $5^3 \times 5^3 \times 5^3 \times 5^3$ , I have a fulfilling experience, whereby I learn more about and 'simplify' the equation (Hua XIX: 601-603/1970: 229-230). When remembering Husserl's exceptionally broad definition of intuition, the analogy he advocates for between clarification and intuition appears at least somewhat more reasonable.
- <sup>15</sup> These two manuscripts are entitled, "Drive-Feeling, Feeling of Lack, Desire, and Wish" (Hua XLIII/2: 482-490), and, "Wish and Desire. The Founding Act of the Wish" (Hua XLIII/2: 491-505).
- <sup>16</sup> As outlined in 3.32, when wishing, I experience many different values of the pertinent object and my current circumstances. However, directly following Husserl, I only discuss the objectification of and judgments about the value that is referred to by the wish position itself in this section.
- <sup>17</sup> In this sense, all intentions are objectifying or potentially objectifying. In WL, Husserl goes further, writing that, "The title 'objectifying act' thus swallows up everything, and we fail to see how we could maintain the concept of a nonobjectifying act" (Hua XXVIII: 333). He ratifies this observation in Ideas I (Hua III-1: 244). However, in what follows I continue to label perceptions, imaginations, judgments as objectifying intentions for two reasons. First, Husserl still maintains that only these intentions themselves are eo ipso objectify. Feeling intentions (and willing acts) still require actually (and not potentially) positing objectifying intentions for the objectification of their referents (Hua III-1: 258-262/1983: 268-272). Second, I myself cannot think of other terms to distinguish between these two kinds of intentions without introducing more complicated jargon. So long as the reader keeps in mind that the later Husserl believes that feelings are (potentially) objectifying, there is little danger of misinterpretation.
- <sup>18</sup> In this sense, the process of legitimization can help to secure the truth of the objective judgement about that value, in the same way that inspecting an object, which is intended in lower level acts, can help ensure the truth of the relevant objective judgment execute via the higher level act. Future research will be dedicated to further investigating this insight.

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